

Lusitania100 Cork Remembers

**~Lusitania centenary to be marked by commemorative events in Kinsale,
The Old Head, Cobh and Courtmacsherry, Cork~**

This May, four coastal communities in Co. Cork are coming together to host a series of commemorative events, entitled *Lusitania100 Cork*, to mark the centenary of the sinking of the *RMS Lusitania* by a German U-boat off the coast of Cork, Ireland, during the First World War. The *Lusitania* was en route to Liverpool from New York and 1,198 people lost their lives in the tragedy.

Kinsale, The Old Head, Cobh and Courtmacsherry in Co. Cork will pay tribute to all those who lost their lives in 1915 and remember the gallant efforts of their ancestors who responded with great courage and compassion to rescue survivors, the bereaved, and recover the dead, in ordinary fishing boats and lifeboats. These communities witnessed first-hand the trauma and heartbreak of the disaster.

The Old Head of Kinsale is the point from which the *Lusitania* took her final bearing on 7th May 1915 and is the most prominent accessible point of land to the ship's final resting place, which is just over eleven miles due south of the Old Head Lighthouse.

The old British Royal Navy Watch Tower of the Seven Heads peninsula in Courtmacsherry Bay is the closest point of land to the *Lusitania* wreck, and also home to the oldest RNLI Lifeboat Station in Ireland, which was instrumental in the aftermath of the disaster.

The mass grave at the Old Church Graveyard on the Great Island of Cobh was the final resting place of the dead, and to this day there are remains that have never been named or claimed.

The commemorations for *Lusitania100 Cork* are vast and will include Wreath Laying Ceremonies with President Michael D. Higgins in Cobh, and Minister Simon Coveney at the *Lusitania* Monument on the Old Head, both at 2.10 pm on May 7th, the time the tragedy happened.

A number of re-enactments of the tragedy will also take place. Courtmacsherry will recreate the call to service of the RNLI lifeboat, while Cobh will remember their rescue efforts with a twilight Flotilla of work boats, fishing boats and pleasure craft, each illuminated with white

lights. Cobh will also re-enact the Mass Funeral procession, and Kinsale town is recreating the aftermath Inquest with descendants of the 1915 Jury.

The Old Head Signal Tower (and the associated Flag- and –Ball signalling system), is being restored and transformed into a Lusitania Museum, with plans to exhibit artefacts recovered from the wreck. This will be officially opened on May 7th. Eventually the Museum will also host an iconic piece of sculpture with the names of all who sailed on the Lusitania on May 7th 1915. A new Lusitania Exhibition will also open at the Queenstown Story at Cobh Heritage Centre from March 25th.

In addition, all four communities will host Lusitania related lectures, talks, photographic exhibitions, memorabilia and street fairs, and centenary commemoration dinners. A free open air tribute concert encompassing music from Cork's Harbour will also take place on Cobh's Promenade on May 7th, a perfect vantage point to view the twilight Flotilla.

Kinsale History Society and Port of Cork have both launched schools initiatives, encouraging primary and secondary students to study Lusitania and submit Lusitania projects, essays and art for display at the Temperance Hall in Kinsale town Centre and Cobh Maritime Building over the commemoration week.

For more information on *Lusitania100 Cork* see the schedule below or visit www.visitcorkcounty.com/Lusitania100Cork.

Courtmacsherry:

Friday 1st May

- **6 – 9pm:** Lusitania Exhibitions in Lifeboat Station and Community Hall showing artefacts, memorabilia and story boards focusing on the local connection to events of 1915. Ryder and Courtmacsherry Lifeboats available for public viewing.
- **7.45pm:** Flyover by an Irish Coastguard helicopter
- **8pm:** Official Opening of Centenary Weekend by Mr Simon Coveney, T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Marine & Food (and Defence) on Courtmacsherry pier followed by refreshments in Courtmacsherry Community Hall.

Saturday 2nd May:

- **11am– 9pm:** Daily Lusitania Exhibitions in Lifeboat Station and Community Hall. Model Exhibition at St. John the Evangelist Church of Ireland. Lectures and talks in prominent places of interest such as Blind Strand, Lislee and Butlerstown. Bus transport arranged from village. Short Stories in Bars and Café’s throughout the day. See local notice boards for further details
- **2 – 5.30pm:** Ryder and Courtmacsherry Lifeboats alongside pontoon on pier for public viewing.
- **5.30pm:** Pulling and Sailing Lifeboat display with restored Ryder Lifeboat.
- **8pm:** Lusitania talk and presentation in Community Hall.

Sunday 3rd May:

- **11am – 9pm:** Lusitania Exhibitions in the Lifeboat Station and Community Hall. Model Exhibition at St. John the Evangelist Church of Ireland. Lectures and talks in prominent places of interest such as Blind Strand, Lislee and Butlerstown. Bus transport arranged from village. Short Stories in Bars and Café’s throughout the day. See local notice boards for further details
- **11am:** The Courtmacsherry RNLI Lifeboat crew will row to the site of the Lusitania sinking in a restored pulling and sailing “Ryder” Lifeboat, built in 1902, courtesy of the Polperro Lifeboat Trust U.K. This lifeboat is very similar to the “Kezia Gwilt” that was stationed in Courtmacsherry in 1915 and took part in the rescue effort on May 7th. This will be launched opposite the Old Lifeboat Station in Barry’s Point. The Launch will follow the Narration of the Story of the Lusitania and the RNLI Lifeboat call to Service, narrated by family members of the original Lifeboat crew on Blind Strand. The Combined Choirs of the Parish and local schoolchildren will also take part in the Pageant.
- **3.30pm:** Lusitania talk and presentation in Community Hall.
- **8.00pm:** Return of Ryder lifeboat to Courtmacsherry Pier after completion of row to site of Lusitania (exact ETA to be confirmed on the day).

Monday 4th May

- **11am – 5pm:** Lusitania Exhibitions in Lifeboat Station and Community Hall. Model Exhibition at St. John the Evangelist Church of Ireland.

- **2pm – 5pm:** Ryder and Courtmacsherry Lifeboats alongside pontoon on pier for public viewing.

Wednesday 6th May:

- **8.00pm:** Black tie Centenary Dinner in Courtmacsherry Hotel, in aid of RNLI. Limited availability.

Thursday 7th May:

- **Time TBC:** Commemoration mass at Church of Our Lady, Star of the Sea.
- **2.10pm:** Wreath Laying over site of Lusitania by Courtmacsherry RNLI Lifeboat
- **2.10pm:** 1198 personalised balloons will be set off by the 13 schools from around the west Cork coast that were visited by the Courtmacsherry Lifeboat Education presenters in the last 2 months. Each balloon will bear the name of a Lusitania victim. Balloons will also be released from the Courtmacsherry lifeboat station, Barry's point and Butlerstown.

Cobh:

April:

Throughout April there will be a series of free lectures in Cobh as well as screenings of films and documentaries relating to Lusitania. These are as follows:

- Monday 6th April Ray White - The making of the documentary "Death by misadventure" & John Hennessey - "The Queenstown Lifeboat station" 3 pm Commodore Hotel
- Sunday 12th April Michael Martin "Lusitania - It wasn't and it didn't" 3.30 pm Commodore Hotel – after the annual Cobh Titanic Commemoration
- Sunday 19th April Eoin McGarry "Diving the Lusitania" 3 pm Commodore Hotel
- Sunday 26th April Paddy Sullivan "The sinking of the Lusitania, Unravelling the Mysteries" 3pm Commodore Hotel

Thursday 7th May:

All visitors and locals are requested to enter into the spirit of the day and dress in outfits of the era when coming to these events.

- **7am:** Queen Victoria ‘Lusitania Remembered’ themed cruise arrives at Cobh Cruise Terminal with 144 passengers on-board.
- **All day:** Photographic Exhibit in the Cunard Building, Port of Cork School Initiative projects on display in Cobh Maritime Building, Lusitania Exhibit at the Queenstown Story in Cobh Heritage Centre, new Lusitania Exhibition entitled ‘Lusitania – A Day in May’ at Cobh Museum, housed in the former Scots Presbyterian Church.
Make sure you visit The Lusitania Peace Memorial in Cobh, which epitomises the efforts made by people to rescue survivors, recover bodies and comfort the bereaved.
- **10am:** Special mass in St. Coleman’s Cathedral for families and friends of survivors, those lost and the brave local people who came to their aid. All welcome.
- **11am:** Cobh Museum in association with Cobh Library, will host a Lecture by historian Giollamuire O Murchu entitled: Siochain Ainm De/ And all her paths are peace – American Angels, Irish Rescuers: The true story of the Lusitania Peace Memorial 1925-1968.

Graveyard Ceremony – Old Church Graveyard

- **12pm:** Wreath laying ceremony at the graves of Lusitania victims takes place at Old Church graveyard with Chairman of Cunard and Chairman of Port of Cork.

Main Ceremony – Promenade

- **1pm:** Performance by Band 1 Southern Brigade.
- **1.15pm:** President Michael D Higgins Arrives.
- **13.35pm:** Ceremony commences.
- **2.10pm – 2.30pm:** Queen Victoria will sound a whistle to mark the moment Lusitania was hit by the torpedo, and a Naval vessel at anchor off the Promenade will respond This will be followed by a minutes silence and blessings, and hymns by Ryan Morgan, Amanda Neri and Joe Corbett with Concert Orchestra. The Queen Victoria will then sound a second whistle to mark the sinking of Lusitania, and again the Naval vessel will respond, and there will be another minutes silence. The Captain of Queen Victoria will recite ‘Ode of Remembrance.

Wreath Laying Ceremony – Lusitania Monument, Town Square

- **2.35pm:** Wreath laying ceremony by President Higgins and British, German and US Ambassadors. This will end the official commemoration.
- **2.45pm – 4.15pm:** Musical performances will take place on the Main Stage in the Promenade by Ryan Morgan, Amanda Neri & Joe Corbett with Concert Orchestra.
- **3.00pm:** Professor Angela John, Historian will give a talk in Cobh Library - *A Survivor's Story: Margaret Haig Mackworth & the Sinking of the Lusitania*
- **4.00pm:** Dr John Borgonovo, School of History, UCC will give a talk in Cobh Library - *Lusitania, Cork Harbour and the Underwater War, 1914 – 1918*
- **6.30pm:** Queen Victoria departs Cobh
- **8-10pm:** A free open air musical tribute concert encompassing music from Cork's Harbour will take place in Cobh's Promenade to set the tone and give the perfect vantage point to view the Flotilla at 9.15pm. Music from Ireland and America will date from the period and there will also be a range of sea shanties of the era.
- **9.15pm:** A Flotilla of work boats, fishing boats and pleasure craft, each illuminated with white lights, will sail from Roche's Point towards Cobh. The boats will re-enact the rescue efforts and symbolise the return to Cobh on 7th May 1915 of boats filled with victims and survivors. The use of searchlights and white lights will provide a poignant and memorable spectacle from many varied vantage points and will allow local communities along the Cork coastline, including Fort Camden and Whitegate to have their own tributes and ceremonies.
- **9.45pm:** Grand Finale of all the contributors to this Centenary Commemoration on the main stage in the Promenade.
- **9.30pm:** Boat carrying the Cunard Flag comes ashore & The Procession of Light from Kennedy Pier in the Centre of town to the main stage in the Promenade with the bells of Cobh Cathedral ring out across the harbour. The illumination of the Lusitania Monument.

Sunday 10th May

- **All day:** Photo Exhibition at Cunard Building, Lusitania Exhibit at Queenstown Story.

- **3.00pm:** A re-enactment of the funeral procession to the Old Church Cemetery from the centre of Cobh to the Old Church Cemetery where the victims are buried. It is intended to replicate the funeral as closely as possible to the funeral order that was in 1915 with the general public invited to dress in clothes of the era. An ecumenical ceremony will be held in the Cemetery.

Monkstown:

- **7.00pm:** Monkstown Chamber Choir are having a special Evensong in St. John's Church Monkstown to commemorate the tragedy of the Lusitania. This will be attended by cadets from NMCI.

Old Head

Thursday 7th May

- **1.15pm:** Public assembly at the Lusitania monument on the Old Head of Kinsale.
- **1.40pm:** Arrival of coastguard Air Sea rescue helicopter. Courtmacsherry 1915 replica lifeboat at the Old Head Signal Tower.
- **2.00pm:** Commemoration ceremony begins.
- **2.10pm:** 1 minute silence, followed by prayer service and laying of wreaths at the monument, and a lament specially composed by Linda and Irene Buckley. Last post on bugle. Address by Alan Coleman County Mayor, Michael Dow, grandson of Lusitania Captain Dow, historian Stuart Williamson and Simon Coveney T.D. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Marine.
- **2.45pm:** Unveiling of commemorative plaque by Minister Coveney near the Lusitania monument.
- **3.00pm:** Official Opening of the Old Head Restored Signal Tower (and the associated Flag- and –Ball signalling system), which is being restored and transformed into a Lusitania Museum, with plans to exhibit artefacts recovered from the wreck. Eventually the Museum will also host an iconic piece of sculpture with the names of all who sailed on the Lusitania on May 7th 1915.
- **3.30pm:** Irish Coastguard helicopter will open to public. The Signal Tower will also open to the public. From the parapet walkway the full panorama of one of Ireland's most scenic peninsula's will unfold.

Kinsale

28th March

- Time TBC: Saturday Night at the Movies in Ballincurra House, “Terror at Sea, the Lusitania” – admission by ticket only.

Wednesday 6th May:

- **6.00pm:** Lectures at the Speckled Door, organised by Bandon & Kinsale History Societies.

Thursday 7th May:

- **10.30am:** Lusitania Town Walk from the Tourist Office
- **2.10pm:** Minute silence in all schools in Kinsale while church bells ring, and the release of 1200 balloons.
- **5.00pm:** Mr Simon Coveney T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food, Marine & Defence will meet decedents of the 1915 Jury for re-enactment by Kinsale College Drama Students/ Kinsale Rampart Players. (Numbers limited.)
- **Time TBC:** Launch of Lusitania stamps at Kinsale Post Office.

Friday 8th May:

- **11am-1pm:** Drama at the Kinsale Community School followed by drama at Naomh Eltin N.S. for 6th class primary pupils.
- **3.00pm:** Official opening of the Federation of History Societies Conference in the Trident Hotel.
- **7.30 -8.30pm:** Commemorative Concert in St. Multose Church with History Society, Lydian singers, KAOS, and the RNLi and local clergy to include inquest re-enactment by Kinsale College Drama students/ Kinsale Rampart Players, ecumenical prayers and wreath-laying.
- **9pm:** Opening of the annual conference of the Federation of History societies with dinner and keynote speech by Greg Bemis.

- The Creation of Lusitania Exhibition highlighting the story of the Lusitania and relevance of Kinsale in the subsequent inquests will be showcased in the Kinsale Museum.

Saturday 9th May:

- **10.30am-1.30pm:** AMG of the Federation at Trident Hotel
- **2pm-4pm:** Street Fair organised by the Kinsale Good Food circle, Market Quay, with the Animation group from Cobh.
- **3pm-5.30pm:** Lusitania Seminar with speakers from the U.S. UK and Ireland, followed by visit to the Signal Tower at the Old Head.
- **10am-6pm:** Local schools art and project exhibition at the Kinsale Temperance Hall. Courtesy of Courtmacsherry RNLi at the 1915 lifeboat will be on exhibition in Kinsale.

Sunday 10th May

- **10am-6pm:** Local schools art and project exhibition at the Kinsale Temperance Hall.
- **Time TBC: (postponed?)** Sea Sunday, an annual event that commemorates those who were lost at sea and prays for the safety of those out at sea, will take place in St. Multose Church with access to a rescue boat from Courtmacsherry. This will be followed by a wreath laying ceremony and a parade to the Seaman's Memorial on Kinsale Pier.

For more information see www.visitcorkcounty.com/Lusitania100Cork, Facebook or Twitter #Lusitania100Cork.